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THE



PROGRESSIVE



FARMER.

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THE TRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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THE NATIONAL FARMERS' ALLIANCE AND INDUSTRIAL UNION.

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PAPERS.

Progressive Farmer, State Organ, Raleigh, N. C.
Caucasian, Raleigh, N. C.
Savannah, Hickory, N. C.
Banner, Whitakers, N. C.
Beaver Dam, N. C.
Lumberton, N. C.
The Populist, Concord, N. C.
The People's Paper, Charlotte, N. C.
The Plow-Boy, Wadesboro, N. C.
Carolina Watchman, Salisbury, N. C.

Each of the above-named papers are requested to keep the list standing on the first page and add others, provided they are duly elected. Any paper failing to advocate the Ocala platform will be dropped from the list promptly. Our people can now see what papers are published in their interest.

AGRICULTURE.

The well will drain a considerable area and so often becomes a cause of disease. Watch the condition of the well water.

Germany is growing fond of American apples, and there is some prospect that a part of our surplus fruit may find an export market in that country.

The shipment of American apples to Europe this year up to October 29th is 1,079,770 barrels, an excess of 905,202 barrels over last year. The demand is growing for American apples.

Canada has a practical, sensible, brainy farmer for the new Minister of Agriculture. It is hoped that an equally suitable man will be appointed for our next U. S. Secretary of Agriculture.

Don't put off looking over the machinery to see if it needs repairs. If you do you may be like the man who was going to oil a creaking door every day for forty years, and died without doing it.

Balanced farming is a fad of the time. A balanced fertilizer for the soil, a balanced ration for the cattle, and even balanced food for the home table. Any of these balances are more easily obtained by the farmer than a balance at the bank.

A fruit grower advises that when it is necessary to saw large limbs from a tree, two cuts should be made, the first a foot or more above the permanent one. This prevents tearing down, and will allow a smooth amputation to be easily made; also, cut under a little first, so that the bark won't tear down.

It is rather discouraging to a farmer who has bought a new cow for milk and butter to find when he begins to feed her high that her feed goes to inside fat rather than to milk and butter. But it is always well to face unpleasant facts, and make the best of them. If some dealer has stuck you with that kind of a cow it is better to know it, and keep on feeding until the cow is fit for the butcher, than to reduce feed and lose more, keeping the cow thin in flesh by poor feeding, and thereby losing money several years instead of one.

HOW THE GROUND BREATHES.

French experimenters have lately brought out interesting facts about the circulation of air in the soil. It appears that considerable oxygen is absorbed by the roots of plants, and the supply of this oxygen is maintained by air penetrating through the minute interstices of the soil. When the ground is covered with water, or when the molecules, or grains, of soil are dissolved in water and packed into an immense mass, then air cannot circulate below the surface, and vegetation suffers.

The experiments referred to show that lime or salt in the soil solidify the earthy molecules and prevent their being dissolved and packed by the action of water; hence the importance of lime in keeping the ground open and permeable for the circulation of both air and rain water.

An Illinois farmer has discovered that seed corn soaked in coal oil renders the growing corn proof against the chinch bug. The seed for five acres were soaked in coal oil, and that for forty acres was not. The chinch bugs ate up the corn in the forty acre field, but never touched that on the five acres.

A MARK OF PROGRESS.

Agriculture in the public schools! A demand for it is becoming strong. It was voiced by the national grange last week and will be urged by this powerful organization in many States. A fine paper on the subject by Ethan Brooks was favorably received at the farmers' congress. In New Jersey, the board of education has already taken up the matter, while in Connecticut it is being carefully considered. The inception of the movement, in every case, comes from the farmers themselves. They realize that the tendency of our schools is too much away from the soil and the shop—too much toward the professions and vocations in which "good clothes and soft hands" are looked to, rather than brain, brawn and character. Our farmers want an influence at work in the public schools to counteract this tendency. They seek for the same effect in rural schools that the most advanced educators are striving to obtain in city schools by manual training. All this is only another instance of the farmer's grasp of affairs and of his ability to intelligently grapple with the deepest problems of our increasingly complex civilization. It is neither possible nor desirable to make an agricultural college out of each public school, but it is feasible to infuse a new spirit into rural education, to impart to the young mind a conception of the natural sciences in this wonderful world about us, to suggest the application of those principles in the work of household and farm, to firmly ground the rising generation in the vital truth that the dignity and prosperity of labor and of agriculture are the foundation of our free institutions.

To destroy rats around the stable or barn, cover the floor near their holes with a thin layer of moist caustic potash. When the rats walk in this it makes their feet sore. These they lick with their tongues, which makes their mouths sore, and the result is that they not only shun this locality, but it seems to prevent others coming, so that the house and neighborhood is entirely abandoned by them. Watch that your dogs do not get in the pot ash.

WINTERING CELERY.

There is a large percentage of celery lost every year after storing. One is apt to be too anxious; it is not good policy to start covering celery too early. A certain amount of frost will do it no harm; in fact it will help to harden up the plants. One important thing must be guarded against—never allow the celery to sweat after protecting. Such plants would be difficult to keep after once they get too hot. It is a waste of time to try to keep celery after it has started to decay. There are different methods of wintering celery, but if anyone wants good favored, tender stalks, winter the crop in the natural soil. Of course there is more work attached to this method, although it is not such a job after all. Suppose we put two or three rows together, then with boards on the top to shed the rain, the plants can be easily protected by leaves or salt hay. In storing two or three rows together it is advisable to have, say, one inch of soil between the rows. When celery touches, or, in other words, when the stalks are

stacked closely together, they are liable to rot; but having the soil between them will help to keep them cooler. In severe weather, celery stored thus is not so easily got at as when stored in the cellar, but one could get out enough one day to last three or four. When celery is not stored in the natural soil, it eats fluffy and lacks the nutty flavor that good celery should have.—Western Ploughman.

Every farmer who burns wood even partially for heating and cooking should as early in the winter as possible cut and pile enough wood to last a whole year. This will save many complaints during the summer, and be much easier done now than in warm weather. Besides, dry wood burns without the waste of the heat, always lost in turning its sap into steam. When using green wood, chips and small limbs will dry out more quickly than will the body of the tree, especially if the small limbs are split.

FINISHING OFF BEEF CATTLE FOR MARKET.

Perhaps on general principles twelve to twenty four months is long enough to keep a bullock profitably. As the value of beef cattle of the same quality varies considerably during each year, a well kept, fleshy, yearling steer or heifer will yield a much larger amount of money to the owner at that age, than the same would months afterward, with its increased growth. Hence the advantage of keeping stock all the time in condition, ready to take advantage of these varying circumstances. These cannot be done if we attempt to follow the ancient custom of growing before fattening and finishing our cattle for the market. Rich and strong grain need not necessarily be fed in quantities that would be detrimental to later growth, should we decide to carry our cattle beyond the two-year limit, and at the same time enough can be fed to have them ready and desirable to the slaughterer and perfectly satisfactory to the consumer. When the market price and other circumstances demand longer feeding, careful and judicious precautions in selecting stock will insure a continued growth and improvement, to repay all the food and care we bestow, although we may safely calculate that less gain, as a rule, will come as a greater age is attained. But as an offset to this loss, there is generally a better demand and advanced price for the more matured bullock, than there is for one of less age and feeding.

The final effort in fattening for the market need or ought not to occupy a great length of time. If the bullock has had such attention as to insure the proper and steady development we are seeking, and such condition of flesh has been secured as to be in fair shape for the butcher at any time, and an additional season of fattening is desired, one hundred to one hundred and fifty days is long enough. Give during this time or as soon during this period as we have brought our cattle safely to the point, all the grain of any kind that is available that they will consume, and pasture or other similar feed with the grain. The best plan in my experience, when fall feeding is to place the grain in a suitable position and allow constant access to it. This plan requires less labor, and the food is then partaken at such times as the appetite demands it, in such quantity as nature indicates. Minute details of any particular method or fancy scheme of feeding I have purposely avoided, for each breeder must supply them by intelligent attention. Every animal disposed of in a thin fleshed condition is at a loss to the producer, while by well-managed work in increasing growth and quality, it would insure a profit. Then there will be an evener distribution of fat and a greater improvement in quality.—Wm. T. Taylor, an Ohio feeder of long experience, in American Agriculturist.

It is doubtless true that it costs more in these days to stock a farm with tools and implements than it did in olden times, when prices of most farm products were as high, if not higher, than now. Yet, despite the cost, the new implements do so much better work that farmers find them a necessity. All the more, therefore, they should take good care of them when bought. More tools rust by exposure to wind and rains than are worn out in actual use. The saving of money by keeping implements housed is the most profitable economy the farmer can practice.

FARMING IN FLORIDA.

To the Northern farmer who must confine his active planting operations to about five months in the year, this all the year round of planting operations as carried on by the Florida farmer may be surprising.

In December he can plow for all the early spring cropping wants.

In January he can mark out and plant corn, potatoes, etc.

In February cane, melons, squashes, etc.

In March tobacco, tomatoes, beans, millet.

In April cowpeas, sweet potatoes (vines or slips), corn for late crop, or fodder.

In May dig Irish potatoes, plant sweet potatoes if seasonable weather comes, sow millet, cowpeas, etc., cut and cure crimson clover, cultivate all spring crops, gather spring vegetables, such as squashes, cucumbers and onions.

In June finish planting sweet potato cuttings, finish sowing millet and cowpeas, gather roasting ears, corn fodder and melons.

In July gather hay, millet, cowpeas, corn fodder, and plow for fall planting.

In August finish hay crop, gather in corn, cowpeas, and sow seeds under shade for fall crop; begin latter part of month to plant for fall gardening.

In September plow and plant and sow for fall and winter crops, cultivate where large enough so to do; hauling manure or compost materials whenever a little opportunity admits of so doing; and this can be done all through the year.

In October he may plow and sow rye or oats, turnips or peas (English), clover (crimson), or rye grass.

In November, he can dig and bank his sweet potatoes, cut and grind his sugar cane, making his sugar and syrup.

This gives eleven months in which planting operations may be carried on to advantage in most of which harvesting is also possible.—Western Rural.

The best general system of farming, says the Texas Farm and Ranch, is that which consumes the products of the soil on the farm where it is grown. This means stock farming. No other system has ever been permanently profitable, and no other system ever enriched a nation.

EXHAUSTED FERTILITY.

The following conclusions by one of our experiment stations apply everywhere: The continued cropping of soils to grain crops only without any system of rotation, or other treatment, is telling severely upon the original stock of half decomposed animal and vegetable matters, and nitrogen. Soils which have produced grain crops, exclusively, for ten or fifteen years, contain from a third to a half less humus and nitrogen than adjoining soils that have never been plowed. Soils which have been cropped until the organic matters and humus have been materially decreased, retain less water and dry out more easily than when there is a larger amount of organic matter present in the soil. Soils which are rich in humus contain a larger amount of phosphates associated with them in available forms than the soils that are poor in humus. Soils which are rich in humus and organic matters produce a larger amount of carbon dioxide that acts as a solvent upon the soil particles and aids the roots in procuring food. One-half of a sandy knoll, heavily manured with well-rotted manure, contained nearly a quarter more water during a six weeks' drought than the other half that received no manure. The supply of organic matter in the soil must be kept up because it takes such an important part, indirectly, in keeping up the fertility of the soil. A good system of rotation, including sub crops, and well prepared farm manures will do this, and will avoid the introduction and use of commercial fertilizers which are now costing the farmers of the United States over thirty five million dollars annually.

A great many people are prone to forget the part that domesticated animals have played in our civilization, and to underestimate their value in the resources of a powerful and progressive nation. The horse has been the true friend of man in the pastoral and agricultural stages, has served him faithfully in war, has administered to his pleasure on the road, the track and in the hunting field, and he will not disappear until civilization itself disappears.

THE DAIRY.

IMPROVEMENT OF DAIRY HERD.

In almost any herd of cattle may be found two distinct types of cows, says R. S. Kingman, one a beef type, and you may know her by her close, compact form, thick shoulders and neck, thick, meaty thigh, close, well-sprung ribs, straight, smooth back, placed disposition. This is a beef cow no matter what her breeding may be. You might as well try to make a successful race-horse of a Norman as to expect a good dairy cow made up as described. For the dairy avoid all cows of this type. The butcher is looking for all such. Let him have them. The other type is almost exactly the opposite in conformation from the one above described. You will find her with thin, sharp shoulders, thin neck and dropping a little at the shoulders, with thin, flat thighs, well apart, to make room for her udder, with broad, long hips, with strong back and pelvic arch, angular shoulders and plenty of chest capacity for lungs and digestion.

ONE CO-OPERATIVE CREAMERY.

A western correspondent of Hoard's Dairyman gives in that paper an account of the history and work of a creamery in his neighborhood. At first it was a private enterprise. The farmers of the vicinity agreed to patronize a creamery if one should be started. Two men erected cheap buildings, put in machinery and hired a buttermaker who had been regularly instructed and knew his business. For five years the owners operated the factory, the same excellent buttermaker remaining with them all the while. He is still in charge it may be said. The farmers sold their milk to the factory.

After five years, however, the farmers themselves bought out the two proprietors and turned the place into a co-operative establishment. What they are doing now may be seen from the following summing up:

Number of patrons, 425.
Estimated number of cows employed, 3,500.

Pounds of butter made from Jan. 1, 1896, to July 1, 1896, six months, 362,000.

Butter made in 1895, 513,000 pounds. During May and June of the present summer the make has been 3,000 pounds per day, and on several occasions 4,000 pounds per day has been made.

There was paid out during the month of June for cream, wages and supplies \$12,932 64

The payments to farmers for cream for several years past have been about \$100,000 per year.

So much for a local business of which we are proud. It is safe to say that the cream from over forty farm separators comes to the creamery.

HANDLING MILK.

Bulletin 21 of North Dakota station treats of Bacteriology and Cleanliness in handling milk. It explains that bacteria are a low order of plant, so small that the naked eye cannot see them; that all organic dirt or filth contains millions of these little plants, and that in milk they increase with great rapidity. It is the effect of the growth of these plants that causes yeast to rise, wine to ferment, milk to sour, etc., etc. Some of these bacteria are very beneficial to the dairyman, as yeast is to the cook. Each separate kind gives to milk and butter a different flavor, and the most advanced dairymen now mix with each churning some cream containing the kind of bacteria that gives the best flavor, just as the cook mixes yeast with the pastry. On the other hand, many of these bacteria are disagreeable and even injurious. These little plants have neither leaves nor roots, and floating dust is full of them. Milk in the glands of the healthy cow contains no bacteria; but if exposed to the open air five hours it contains more than a billion in each quart. Few of these produce disease and care as to cleanliness will exclude all harmful bacteria. The cows should be curried, the stalls kept clean, the milker must wear clean clothes, wash his hands and the cow's udder, and all vessels must be cleansed with scalding water. Direct steaming and sunning are beneficial. Never use soap, nor wooden vessels. Tin vessels with small and easily closed mouths are best. Cool the milk as soon as possible, to 50 to 60 degrees. However, if bacteria of consumption, typhoid or scarlet fever, diphtheria, etc., are suspected, heat to 155 degrees for fifteen minutes, before

cooling. This is hot enough to kill the bacteria without boiling the milk and injuring its flavor. Freezing does not destroy bacteria; hence, never put ice into milk unless it is known to be pure. Only use pure water for cleaning purposes. As bacteria often lurk in the point of a cow's teat, it is well to milk the first stream upon the ground, as it will cleanse the opening.

POULTRY YARD

DAVIS' SNAP SHOTS.

If there is an open top drinking fountain for fowls on the market—one that can be cleaned inside, I have not seen it. Such a fountain, if cheap, would have a large sale.

"Give no water to your chicks until two weeks old," writes some chump in a plate matter chicken article. Wonder if he withholds milk from his babies until two weeks old?

"Moulting time will soon be over; then look out for eggs," writes an enthusiastic amateur. Yes, good idea to look about for eggs. But first look out for lice and mites! Where they are numerous you will look out for eggs in vain.

A score of more of poultry writers exclaim as with one voice: "Now is the time to whitewash!" So 'tis. Better commence at the attic and work down to the basement. Nothing like putting things in shape for winter!—The Fanciers' Review.

A GOOD WORD FOR DUCKS.

Under favorable conditions the breeding of ducks is very profitable, says a writer in the Poultry Monthly, and there are few farms or small country places upon which a few ducks cannot be kept with both pleasure and profit. Of course, these birds belong to the classes of water fowl, and therefore it is desirable to have a pond, spring, brook, lake, or some small, clean body of water in which the ducks may bathe and freshen their plumage (which soon becomes soiled and dirty), as well as secure considerable food in the shape of water plants, insects, worms, etc.

Wherever a duck plant is located near an arm of the sea, the ducks secure much food in the shape of fish, quahaugs, clams, etc., at each ebb tide. But notwithstanding the desirability of water privileges, ducks will get along and do very well with only enough water for drinking purposes, and, indeed, thousands upon thousands of ducks that have grazed tables of hotels, epicures and others never saw more water than their drinking dishes held, from time of hatching until death ended all.

That roast duck is fine eating cannot be denied, and that duck eggs are large and very nutritious also cannot be gainsaid. Hence a flock of a dozen, or less, of ducks will go quite a distance in keeping the family in the best of provision. One very important item about the duck is that, when properly cared for in a small flock, she will continue laying for three or four months a fine, large egg, just as true as the day comes around. The hen is satisfied to lay every other day, or even less, but the duck carries on active business every day.

It is not a good plan to pen ducks in very large flocks. Twenty five ducks to a pen is plenty, and four lively drakes about right for twenty five ducks. During the laying season keep the ducks confined during the forenoon, when the eggs will have been about all dropped; then set them at liberty during afternoon.

Ducks are great eaters, but luckily not over particular. They seem to crave bulky, filling food; so boil roots for them, such as beets, carrots, onions, potatoes and turnips. Mash these and add a mixture of ground grain composed of bran, ground oats, cornmeal and linseed meal. Mix the grain something as follows: One peck of bran, one peck of oats, one peck of cornmeal and two pecks of linseed meal. Do not forget oyster shells for grit and to help form the egg shells, for the making of which a great deal of carbonate of lime is needed.

The young ducklings are at first quite tender and must be kept from rains, water and all dampness. Feed them milk with the regular foods, if possible, and force rapid growth. As soon as they acquire regular feather they are hardy and tough.

"Scribbles and Stubbs don't seem to be as intimate as they once were." "No; Scribbles angered Stubbs by making fun of some of his jokes."—Puck.